

## A STEP CLOSER TO RAMSAR STATUS

Amidst the anticipation and process of being recognized as a Ramsar site for KKWC, SWCS' Exco members — Haji Zainie Abdul Aucasa (President), Omar Abdul Kadir (Honorary Secretary) and Mark Chin (Honorary Treasurer) as well as KKWC's staff — Bobby Alex and Lee Ka Han, made an educational visit to Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, Singapore, on 28/5/2011 and then to the three Ramsar sites in Johor, namely, Tanjung Piai, Pulau Kukup and Sungai Pulai on 29/5/2011. The purpose of the visit is to gain the valuable experience of witnessing first hand the physical outlook, functioning and maintaining of these well established Ramsar sites. While the Singapore trip was self-guided, the Johor Ramsar sites trip was well coordinated by Mohd. Faiz Bin Azman, Ramsar Manager from Perbadanan Taman Negara Johor. Johor currently has the most Ramsar sites (three sites) in Malaysia; with the designation of KKWC as a Ramsar site, Sabah would boast of having two Ramsar sites with interesting contrast — Lower Kinabatangan-Segama Wetlands at 78,803 hectares is the biggest Ramsar site in Malaysia and Kota Kinabalu Wetland Centre, at 24 hectares, would be the smallest.

Despite its size, KKWC plays an important role as a green lung to the city of Kota Kinabalu for carbon sequestration and oxygen release. It also provides a nature-based recreation spot which is highly accessible as it is strategically located at the heart of the city and business centre of Kota Kinabalu. Presently, KKWC continues to face threats and challenges in maintaining its important function as a wetland ecosystem especially from urban development in its surrounding. But bearing in mind that KKWC belongs to the public, for them to enjoy its various benefits for generations to come, the public support in joining SWCS' tireless effort to conserve this piece of treasure is truly vital and priceless.

**Sabah Wetlands  
Conservation Society (SWCS)  
/ Pertubuhan Pemuliharaan Tanah  
Lembap Sabah,  
was established on  
22 August 2005**

Our Objectives:

To promote the conservation of wetlands in Sabah and the variety of plants, birds and other kinds of organisms found in them.

To raise public awareness and appreciation of wetlands and public involvement in protecting wetlands.

To manage Kota Kinabalu Wetland Centre (KKWC) as a model wetlands centre for the purpose of conservation, education, recreation, tourism and research.



R-L: Haji Zainie A. Aucasa, Mark Chin, Omar Abdul Kadir, Bobby Alex and Lee Ka Han at the entrance point to Pulau Kukup.



Haji Zainie Aucasa, SWCS President, crossing the suspension bridge, one of the various facilities available at Pulau Kukup, a mere 2-minute boat ride from south Johor mainland.



The vast and impressive mangrove ecosystem in Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve, Singapore.



On 17/5/2011, KKWC's river was seen to be swarmed by thousands, if not millions, of ragworms or bristleworms. For several hours, the river was turned blackish by the presence of these worms. This is a phenomena that happened all over the world whereby the worms came out from underground in the water to the surface of the water for mating.



Tanjung Piai



Sungai Pulai riverine mangrove system

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## MANGROVES REPLANTING — AN ALL GIRLS DAY OUT



40 girls from Singapore Girls Chinese School braved through what would be the first experience of their lives in stepping into mud to replant mangroves at the Sulaman Lake Forest Reserve on 31 May 2011. The apprehensiveness and self-doubt that engulfed them initially was gradually replaced by elation as they realized that they could manage the muddy task. About 250 saplings were successfully planted in that evening planting session.

## Thank You For An Excellent Service



Lily Jainol bids farewell in May 2011 to SWCS after a full one year service as SWCS Executive Secretary. Describing her experience as eye opening especially on the awareness that dawned upon her in terms of mangroves' importance to the environment. She relished her position with SWCS but was unable to continue further due to family commitment. However, she noted, the passion for mangroves conservation has been instilled in her, one that she would carry for the rest of her life.

## Sabah Youth Day



Organized by the state's Ministry of Youth, Culture and Tourism, Sabah Youth Day ran from 13-15 May 2011. Believing in the value and power of youth and the importance of instilling awareness in them, KKWC assisted by hosting the venue for the Mangrove Race (identifying mangroves types) and Bird Race (spotting birds) competitions. All first timers to KKWC, the youths expressed their appreciation for this experience.

## GUESTS' COMMENTS

"Mangroves are being destroyed in the world everyday as many people don't realize how important they are. We are just so happy to see the mangroves forest here. Although the weather is hot, we feel relax and cool in the forest."



David and Carole Hampton, Australia, 27/5/2011



"We did not see big birds flying around as we had hoped to. Perhaps they are away from the forest and will come back later in the evening. However, we saw little mud life like the fiddler crabs and mud skippers and that is delightful too. Please continue to take care of the forest."

Alan and Francis McKay, Australia, 11/5/2011

## MANGROVES HONEY FROM KKWC



The month of May saw the sudden appearance of several bee hives dotted by the trail of the boardwalk. Jeffrey Lawrence from Koperasi Pembangunan Desa, Keningau (above right pic with dark glasses) was called in to assess the situation. According to Jeffrey, the presence of the bees do not pose any threat to humans; one can pass by the hives without having the fear of being stung, unless, the bees are provoked. On gathering the honey, Jeffrey observed that the sizes of the hives are not yet big enough to produce a decent volume of honey. In his years of experience, Jeffrey stated that this would be his first time overseeing honey collection from a mangrove forest, which would certainly be an interesting possibility, he added. Mangrove forests honey is reputed to possess a unique and distinctively delicious taste.

## UP AND COMING EVENTS IN KKWC — June 2011

- 1 Mangroves replanting at Sulaman Lake Forest Reserve, Tuaran
- 3 Mangroves replanting at Sulaman Lake Forest Reserve, Tuaran
- 4 Mangroves replanting at Sulaman Lake Forest Reserve, Tuaran
- 5 Launching of "Water & Wetlands" Exhibition Hall at KKWC Environmental Education Program for Singapore High School students
- 7 Environmental Voluntary Work by 200 local youth
- 11 Environmental Voluntary Work by >100 Malaysian Association of Hotels members from Kota Kinabalu
- 22 Environmental Education Program for Datuk Simon Fung Kindergaten, Kota Kinabalu
- 25 Mangroves replanting at Sulaman Lake Forest Reserve, Tuaran

\* List is not exhaustive; new events occur from time to time.

## Eight new Interns

reported to KKWC for industrial training which forms parts of their requirement for graduation. They are Salmiza Sharudin, Yusnita Yusuf, Wilvia Olivia Ak William, Patricia Peng Hului, Daniel Chin Zhi Hao, Teeneswary A/P K. Jayaraman and Alice Lim Mei Koi from Universiti Malaysia Sabah and Stefpenny Eric Sungkit from Universiti Teknologi Mara. The receiving of interns is in line with KKWC's objectives to promote education, awareness and research. KKWC has the sources, environment and surrounding to facilitate the interns' study which would equip them the knowledge and experience required not only for the completion of their studies but also as a person who will walk away with deeper awareness on the importance of mangroves restoration and conservation.



Editor-in-Chief: Bobby Alex of KKWC, Supported by Team at KKWC and SWCS; Images property of SWCS

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